

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough examination given the present application.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-5 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended. Support for the recitations in claim 1 can be found in claim 2 as originally filed as well as page 31, line 13 to page 32, line 9 of the present specification. Support for the recitations in claim 2 can be found in the present specification, *inter alia*, at page 35, lines 8-9. No new matter has been added by way of the above amendments. Based upon the above considerations, entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

In view of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw all rejections and allow the currently pending claims.

Examiner's Interview

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for her time during the interview on January 27, 2009. Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to them in this application. During the interview, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph was discussed. Specifically, according to Applicants' understanding, the Examiner indicated that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as well as the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) would be removed if claim 1 were amended to further define the filter and the pH of "an aqueous solution of a basic compound." Applicants have amended claim 1 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions. As such, Applicants believe that the claims are now in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that there remains any outstanding issues, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact Applicants' Representative so as to expedite resolution of these outstanding issues, via an Examiner's Amendment or the like.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse in view of the amended claims.

As noted above, Applicants have amended claim 1 to further define the filter and the pH of "an aqueous solution of a basic compound" as suggested by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments overcome the outstanding rejection and that the rejection be removed.

Issues under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner maintains the rejection of claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pub. 2002/0032299 in view of U.S. Pat. 4,134,964. The Examiner indicates that the previously submitted arguments are understood but the previous rejection will remain until further clarification of the claims has been made.

As understood during the interview, the above amendments to claim 1 provide the necessary clarification to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and 35 U.S.C. § 103. As such, Applicants respectfully traverse the outstanding rejection in view of the amended claims. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the above rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

A full and complete response has been made to all issues as cited in the Office Action. Applicants have taken substantial steps in efforts to advance prosecution of the present application. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance issue for the present case clearly indicating that each of claims 1-5 are allowed and patentable under the provisions of title 35 of the United States Code.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Chad M. Rink, Reg. No. 58,258 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

John W. Bailey

Registration No.: 32,881

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicants